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The Cabinet



THE LIBRARY  
OF  
THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CALIFORNIA  
LOS ANGELES

FREDERIC THOMAS BLANCHARD  
ENDOWMENT FUND

THE  
CABINET;

*A COMIC OPERA,*

IN THREE ACTS:

FIRST PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN,

On TUESDAY, *February 9th, 1802.*

WRITTEN BY

THOMAS DIBDIN,

AUTHOR OF GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY—THE JEW AND DOCTOR—WILL FOR THE DEED—ENGLISH FLEET—FAMILY QUARRELS—THIRTY THOUSAND—IL BONDOCANI—SCHOOL FOR PREJUDICE—VALENTINE AND ORSON—FIVE THOUSAND A YEAR—BIRTH-DAY—NAVAL PILLAR—HORSE AND THE WIDOW—MOUTH OF THE NILE—ST. DAVID'S DAY, &c. &c. &c.

LONDON:

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1805.

## A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE Story of “*The Cabinet*,” which has been erroneously assigned to several very different Sources, is taken from an Old Ballad called the “*Golden Bull.*”

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TO

*WILLIAM CORDY, Esq.*

THIS OPERA

IS INSCRIBED

AS A TRIBUTE OF

THE AUTHOR'S FRIENDSHIP AND RESPECT.

## PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

<b>Count Curvoso</b> (Father to Constantia)		Mr. EMERY.
<b>Lorenzo</b> , his Son, (in love with Leonora)		Mr. INCLEDON.
<b>Prince Orlando</b> (in love with Constantia)		Mr. BRAHAM.
<b>Whimsicula</b> (his confidential Valet)		Mr. FAWCETT.
<b>Peter</b> (a Domestic of Count Curvoso)		Mr. MUNDEN.
<b>Marquis de Grand Chateau</b> (a rich old Nobleman, Suitor to Constantia)		Mr. BLANCHARD.
<b>Manikin</b> , his Page	-	Mr. SIMMONS.
<b>1st Falconer</b>	-	Mr. KING.
<b>Attendants</b>	-	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <span style="margin-right: 10px;">{</span> <span>Mr. ABBOT.</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>Mr. HARLEY.</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>Mr. TRUMAN.</span> </div>
<b>Constantia</b> (Daughter to Count Curvoso)		<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <span style="margin-right: 10px;">{</span> <span>Mrs. H. JOHNSON.</span> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 5px;"> <span>Miss WHEATLEY.</span> </div>
<b>Floretta</b> (her Attendant)	-	Sig. STORACE.
<b>Leonora</b> (Sister to Orlando)	-	Mrs. ATKINS.
<b>Doralice</b> (Step-mother to Orlando)		Mrs. POWELL.
<b>Bianca</b> (an old Cottager)	-	Mrs. DAVENPORT.
<b>Crudelia</b> (in love with Orlando)		Mrs. DIEDIN.
<b>Curiosa</b> (her Attendant)	.	Mrs. MATTOCKS.

**Falconers, Guards, Porters, Gentlemen, and Servants.**

**SCENE**—Alternately on the adjoining Territories of Count Curvoso, and Prince Orlando.

**TIME**—One Day.

THE  
CABINET;  
*A COMIC OPERA.*

---

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Sunrise. An extensive Court-yard in Curvoſo's Palace. A number of Falconers (male and female) discovered, as ready for an excursion.*

GLEE AND CHORUS.

**T**O horse, my merry companions all,  
To horse, to horse, and away !  
The sun-beams on the mountains fall,  
The woodlark sings the Falc'ner's call,  
And hails the dawning day.

1st FALCONER.

The generous steed, so plump and fair,  
Impatient, snuffs the morning air,

CHO. To horse, to horse, and away !

6  
THE CABINET:

Already her game the Falcon spies,  
In vain the game to 'scape her tries,  
Already she seems to reach the skies.

To horse, &c,

*Enter PETER.*

PETER.

Stop—stop—now don't be in a hurry.—The hawks may have a holiday, the steeds may return to their stables, and the pretty little birds enjoy a truce till to-morrow.

FIRST FALCONER.

Pray don't interrupt us; the morning is beautiful, the hawks listen impatiently to the twitterings of the lark, and long to spoil his melody.

PETER.

So it is with envious and foolish rogues in the world, who would gladly peck at the merit that soars above them;—and may all such be kept down to their tethers, as your birds may be; for the old Count won't go out this morning.

FIRST FALCONER.

No!

PETER.

## PETER.

No. So the damsels, and the squires, and the grooms may lay by their green jackets, and prepare all their finery for the reception of the most puissant French Marquis, Julius-Alexander-Augustus-Anna Maria-de-Grand-Chateau, so named after his great castle, and the rest of his godfathers and godmothers; and now on his road hither, to wed with our dear young Mistress, the Lady Constantia. So go along—I have it in command from the Count himself.

[*Exeunt all but First Falconer and Peter.*

## FIRST FALCONER.

This is strange news, Peter. I thought Constantia was to marry Orlando, the young Prince of the neighbouring territory?

## PETER.

The fact is as I state it. The young countess is a truly desirable morsel. Her father and Prince Orlando quarrel about her like an old lion and a young tiger, while the Marquis, a fly old fox, will carry off the prize to a certainty. Ecod, one would think he was born in my country; for, while the buyer and seller are haggling about price, he steps in between, like a *middle-man*, and runs away with the best of the bargain.

## THE CABINET;

FIRST FALCONER.

You are an Englishman, master Peter, and forget that, in this country, we neither know the cuitoms you allude to, nor allow such freedom of speech on the conduct of our betters.

PETER.

The more's the pity. Englishmen never give a greater proof of their freedom than when they're grumbling about it; and, while they speak the honest truth, none but the Father of Lies could wish to stop their mouths.

FALCONER.

And is this news really true you have been telling?

*(A bugle horn heard, and answered.)*

PETER.

If you won't believe my lips, trust to your own eyes, and ask the Marquis himself; for here, I believe, he comes in person, to convince you of it.

*Enter MANIKIN, with two of the Marquis's followers, preceded by an attendant of the castle.*

MANIKIN (*To the Attendant*).

Please to present these letters to the Count.

*[Exit Attendant.]*

Shocking

Shocking travelling! (*Servants adjust him.*) Great pity they cou'dn't invent roads without fun and dust. I'm absolutely exhausted.—A servant of the Count's I presume? (*To Peter, with affected affability.*)

## PETER.

Sir, I am the Count's principal purveyor. He is very magnificent in his entertainments—has cooks of all countries, and I have the honour to preside most particularly over the British department.

## MANIKIN.

And, pray, what kind of foggy materials can that nation furnish to be fit for the table of an Italian Sovereign?

## PETER.

The British dominions, Sir, furnish food of the first quality, which is drest in the most luxurious manner. An Irish stew, a Scotch hodge-podge, a Welch rabbit, and an English plum-pudding, are delicacies, which, till you taste, you can have very little idea of.

## MANIKIN.

Very little indeed!

## PETER.

PETER.

Then Sir, our beef, and the manner of roasting and baking it. The French may crack of their culinary excellence ; but, Sir, I'll maintain it, there isn't a frog in their whole country can be rendered so truly delicious as an English toad in a hole.

MANIKIN.

What ! O la ! I shall never be able to sustain the idea of entering a castle inhabited by toad-eaters.

PETER.

No ! then you'll enter very few castles or great houses of any description, I promise you.

MANIKIN.

Ah ! that may be ; but if my master, the Marquis, entertained the slightest imagination of what you have been telling me —

PETER.

Your master ! Why, a'n't *you* the Marquis ?

MANIKIN.

No, Sir ; but I have the honour to be his Italian valet, and I must own, I feel not a little surprised at the want of respect with which I have been treated.

PETER.

PETER.

Want of respect ! Why, I took you for the Marquis himself. (*Puts on his hat.*)

MANIKIN (*Conceitedly*).

Me for the Marquis !

PETER.

Yes, I did ; and if impudence gave rank, I might have taken you for a Duke.

FALCONER.

Fie, Peter ! you will offend the Marquis by this language to his Gentleman.

PETER.

Gentleman, indeed ! And so I have been descending to unfold my situation in this family to a superintendant of the Marquis's comb-cafes ! and have suffered roast-beef to be run down by an olive-colour'd jackanapes, whose conceit covers him, like wicker-work on a Florence flask.

*Enter an ATTENDANT.*

ATTENDANT (*To Manikin*).

The Count will receive the Marquis the moment he arrives, with all due honours, in the grand saloon of the castle. He prays you, in the mean time, to refresh

refresh yourself; and desires that you, Peter, will attend strictly to the conduct of the great officers of the pantry.

[*Exit.*

MANIKIN.

And, pray, good man, let there be something fit for a human creature to eat; the very thoughts of the bill of fare you have been reciting, will go nigh to give me a fit of indigestion—and I do aver, notwithstanding all your Irish rabbits and Welch stews, there is nothing upon earth can beat an Italian macaroni.

[*Exeunt all but Peter.*

PETER.

Now should I like to disprove that assertion, by beating an Italian macaroni myself. If the master is half as full of emptiness as the servant, poor Lady Constantia will have a bad match of it. Well, if I was a princess, and my father was to say to me, Lauretta, or Lucretia, or Juliana—for a Princess, without a pretty name, were like soup without salt—Celestina, says he, make your father happy, by instantly marrying his good friend, Squintoso Moroso Di Bandini. Says, I to my father, father, says I (being a princess of high breeding), if it is the same thing to you, father, I'd rather let it alone—and, moreover, than that, may the devil fetch me, if—Eh! no, the Princess shou'dn't swear.—But at all events, before a parent of mine shou'd be so cruel, so tyrannical, so ill-natur'd—

*Enter*

*Enter FLORETTA.*

Now, what do you come teizing me for, when I am so full of business, I don't know which way to turn myself?

FLORETTA.

Oh! my dear father, I'm so unhappy.—The Lady Constantia will be disappointed of her lover, and, what's worse, I shall lose mine into the bargain.

PETER.

You lose a lover! Why, this is the first time I ever heard you had found one.

FLORETTA.

Why, now its all over, there's no harm in confessing that we did love one another a little; but we shall never meet again; for he'll not be admitted in the castle, any more than his master; so, I'll return to my duty with cheerfulness. (*Bursts into tears.*)

PETER.

Now I'll be judged by all the fathers in the world, if this isn't vile treatment—first she disposes of her affections without consulting me, and then falls a crying, to shew how cheerfully she returns to her duty. Hark ye, you baggage, if ever you dare to think of any man, without my leave, I swear by the authority of— (*Hesitating with passion.*)

## THE CABINET;

FLORETTA (*Weeping*).

Of a father?

PETER (*Soften'd*).

Yes, of a father. I am your father, a'n't I?—Lord love thee, don't cry, my child. (*Takes her in his arms.*) There—you see the consequence of making me angry.—Go, and be a good girl.—Go and comfort your lady—I forgive you, because I see you're sorry for your fault.

FLORETTA.

Yes, father, indeed I am very sorry—for he was the sweetest young man—no, I didn't mean that—I meant to say—Oh, dear, dear, how very unhappy I am!

## BALLAD—FLORETTA.

My love, the gayest of the throng,  
The first of swains in cot or city;  
With me would laugh the whole day long,  
But, now he's gone—Oh! what a pity!

## II.

With him in mirth the hours went by,  
He woo'd in words so soft and pretty;  
But, now he's gone, and left poor I  
Alone to weep—Oh! what a pity!

[Exit.]

PETER.

## PETER.

Ah ! this comes of trying to act out of character.  
I cou'dn't represent a Princess three minutes, without bringing the devil into conversation ; nor abuse the hard heartedness of other parents, without shewing my own : well may it be said, " Shut the door against Nature, and she'll find her way in at the window."

## SONG—PETER.

Says the fable so pat,  
Once a man had a cat  
Of beauty, and manners uncommon :  
With wonderful taste she could swallow a rat,  
Wash her face with a grace, ogle, pur, and all that,  
'Till her master, who didn't know what to be at,  
Pray'd Venus to make her a woman.  
Thus, a strange metamorphosis love brought about,  
Her ears they sunk in, and her nose it came out,  
While her whiskers and tail  
Found their offices fail,  
And her eyes, bright and green as gooseberries,  
Turn'd black as two floes,  
Claws, to fingers and toes,  
And her lips to a couple of cherries.

## II.

Puss married her master, but short his delight,  
Repentance in wedlock is common :  
She slept all the day, kept awake all the night,  
He thought she could swear, and he knew she could fight,  
And woe to a mouse, if it came in her sight,  
Which proves a cat can't be a woman.  
Hubby's prayers now a secong exchange brought about,  
Her nose it fell in, and her ears they grew out,

While

## THE CABINET;

While her whiskers and tail,  
 No longer did fail,  
 Her lips no more pouted like cherries,  
 She had claws to her toes,  
 And her eyes, black as floes,  
 Turn'd to two pretty little gooseberries.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—*A grand saloon in the castle.**Enter COUNT CURVOSO and Attendants.*

CURVOSO.

There, there, don't follow me, but go and see all ready for the Marquis's reception. Go, and send my son Lorenzo to me. [Exeunt Attendants.] I'm not only to be plagued with my daughter's non-sensical love for Orlando, but my son, forsooth, must hanker after his sister; however, this day will rid me of half my troubles, at any rate; and, when Constantia is wedded to the Marquis, it will be an easy matter to manage a son; but daughters and wives are so perverse, and so artful, that nothing less than such a head as mine could ever prove a match for them.

*Enter LORENZO.*

Well, Sir, are you, and all your followers, ready to receive the Marquis, as your future brother-in-law, and my son?

LORENZO.

LORENZO.

I am ever ready to bow to your commands, my Lord; though there was a time, when my duty and my wishes were more congenial.

CURVOSO.

Ay: for instance, when I commanded you to pay your addresses to Leonora—

LORENZO.

I flew with rapture to obey you.

CURVOSO.

And, now, when, for weighty reasons I order you to relinquish her—

LORENZO.

You turn from its source the delicious spring which filled my cup with happiness.

AIR—LORENZO.

How blest was I, when late you smil'd

On her whom I adore!

Delusive hopes the hours beguil'd;

But hope is now no more.

Thus, on a last remaining stay

The shipwreck'd wretch relies,

The surges dash his bark away,

He struggles, sinks and dies.

So I, when late a parent smil'd

On her whom I adore,

With hope's vain dream my hours beguil'd;

But hope is now no more.

[Exit:

CURVOSO.

Ay, there's always a vast number of pretty things to be said by undutiful children in behalf of disobedient

obedience ; but it's not my business to listen to them. Here comes another to assail me ; but it will be of no avail. If they are unacquainted with their duty, I know mine, and am resolved to follow its dictates.

*Enter CONSTANTIA.*

Though a modern Italian, I possess the spirit of the ancients. Brutus never listened to his children when propriety forbade him. His *country* was his family, and *I* act for my family as I would for my country.

**CONSTANTIA.**

You confess then, my Lord, that we are to be sacrificed.

**CURVOSO.**

No ; the sons of Brutus were decapitated. And, though your future husband will receive a good wife from me, I don't insist on your being an absolute good *woman*. He shall have you with your *head* on at any rate.

**CONSTANTIA.**

Is the heart to be quite out of the question ? Ah, Sir ! have you not approved the addresses of Orlando ? have you not permitted me to approve them ?

**CURVOSO.**

Yes ; and what then ?

**CONSTANTIA.**

Have you not suffered me to receive his presents ?

**CURVOSO.**

Yes ; and now I suffer you to send them back again.

**CONSTAN-**

## CONSTANTIA.

And, after this, what can he think of me? A woman, who knows what honour prescribes, conceals the approaches of affection, even from herself, till consent of parents, a thorough trial of her own heart, and her suitor's virtues, consecrate the words, "I love"—but these words once uttered, and uttered with such sanction, it were dishonour to recal them.

## CURVOSO.

Never mind that—I recal them. The Marquis is richer and more powerful than Orlando; besides, he treats me with greater respect. He has sent me a letter a yard long, inclosed in a golden case, with all my titles at full length, with an additional one at the end of 'em; and when I wonder how I came by it, I find a grant of the estate to which it belongs. And, if one Gentleman will come a wooing in this sort of way, why, other Gentlemen mus'n't be angry because we chuse to listen to him.

## CONSTANTIA.

Poor Orlando!

## CURVOSO.

That's just what I say—"Poor Orlando."

## CONSTANTIA.

Sir, a virtuous man is *never* poor. Orlando is still noble, still royal in my estimation; for he bears in his heart the most splendid gifts of nature, honour, and integrity.

## CURVOSO.

That I believe; but by the aggression of a powerful enemy, he has lost half his territories. This

he has informed me of, and given his honour not to accept you, but from my hands, nor to receive you till I send you to him, and I know he'll keep his word. (*Music without.*) But, hark ! the Marquis approaches. Who waits there ? Let us receive him with the honour he merits.

(*March of flutes and other light instruments.*)

**The MARQUIS** enters, most elegantly drest, preceded and followed by twelve Gentlemen in splendid liveries, Manikin leading the way. **WHIMSICULO** enters, disguised among the Marquis' suite.

#### CURVOSO.

My Lord, this honour—

**MARQUIS** (*With affected gallantry, and vainly struggling to conceal his age and infirmities.*)

Is conferr'd on me, in being allowed to kiss your hands, and those of your beautiful daughter. You'll excuse me, my dear Lord—but to be introduced to *her* will be the most rapid step I have hitherto taken towards the abode of perfect felicity.

(**CONSTANTIA** is introduced by her father, in dumb shew.)

#### CURVOSO.

There, daughter, did Orlando ever address you in this manner ?

#### CONSTANTIA.

Never.

#### MARQUIS.

What elegant flattery ! I shou'dn't have so long delayed offering incense to your charms ; but a pa-

sion like mine required more than common preparation to express it.—Manikin, where are my ideas of rational affection, and connubial happiness.

MANIKIN.

Your Lordship's ideas are in the pocket of your private secretary.

(*Takes a long paper from one of the Gentlemen and gives it to the Marquis.*)

MARQUIS.

This attempt to celebrate—Eh ! why, by the honour of my ancestry, this is the list of my estates.—Blockhead !

CONSTANTIA,

Ridiculous !

CURVOSO.

I don't think so ; the Marquis isn't the first who includes his rent-roll among his ideas of rational happiness. If you'll give me leave, my Lord, I'll just take a look at it.

MARQUIS (*Having taken another paper, presents it.*)

This, Madam, this is what I intreat you to consider as the production of truth, dictated by affection.

CURVOSO (*reading the rent-roll.*)

And this is a production equal to the richest vein of descriptive poetry. It's full of real good things. Castles, rivers, fish-ponds and corn-fields form the subject, and every line concludes with sterling value.

TRIO—CURVOSO, MARQUIS, and CONSTANTIA.

MARQ.: Accept, accept, celestial Fair,  
The homage of a love sincere.

## THE CABINET;

CONST. I neught can offer but despair:  
Another reigns triumphant here:  
Duty and love alike are dear.

MARQ. She doesn't take my suit amiss,

CONST. How shall I free from blame appear?

CURVOSO. If any blame you, shew 'em this, (*the rent-roll.*)

MARQ. Nor Venus, nor Dian, nor all the three Graces  
Had ever such fingers, such arms, or such faces;  
Had ever such beauties as beam thro' your eyes,

CURVOSO. Such castles, domains, forests, parks, and fine places,  
Orlando and love are my only replies.

MARQ. Europa, Alcmena, so fam'd for the kisses  
By Jupiter snatch'd, nor the rest of his misses,  
Not Ovid could write —

CURVOSO. Such a rent-roll as this is.

CONST. Oh, hear me, dear father! how hard is my fate!  
Of Dido, or Daphne, your Poets may prate,  
But they never cou'd boast

CURVOSO. Such a charming estate.

CONST. How cruel! Ah, hear!

MARQ. Nor Calypso—Eurydice,

CONST. Nay, then, I'm resolv'd —

CURVOSO. Not to do what you're bid, I see,

CONST. 'Tis a daughter,

MARQ. A lover,

BOTH. That sues at your feet.

MARQ. and CONST. Soft pity, soft pity is all I intreat. } together.

CURVOSO. Obedience, obedience is all I intreat. }

## CURVOSO.

Marquis, you shall be married to-morrow; the perusal of this has added to my anxiety for the match, and heightened my former ideas of your Lordship's merit.

## MARQUIS.

Those possessions, Count, are only valuable, as objects to lay at the feet of Constantia; for what are houses

houses when compared to happiness, castles to content, or lawns to love? Love turns the system of vassalage topsy-turvy;—the Lord of large domains becomes a servant; and life and death are in the power of beauty to sentence, or bestow on him.

## CONSTANTIA.

My Lord, I am very far from being able to reply to this high-flown strain of compliment, in the style of your wish.—My father promised to unite me to one whom duty will teach me, at present, to avoid; but I owe it to truth and honour to declare I never will give my hand to another. [Exit.]

## MARQUIS.

If the young Lady persists in this resolution, I shall begin to think she has some kind of objection to our negotiation.

## CURVOSO.

True, my dear Marquis, if she *was* to persist, it might turn out as you say; but she'll change her mind—women are a sort of a——we all know what women are—they are like boats—if you want 'em to go one way, you must pull another.

## MANIKIN.

My Lord, I ask pardon; but here is a varlet, who has intruded himself under the disguise of my Lord Marquis's livery, and has been endeavouring to convey a letter to the Lady Constantia. Don't let him come near me; for he told me, if I said a single word he would knock me down.

CURVOSO.

Oho ! this is Signior Whimsiculo, confidential servant to your Lordship's rival, Orlando, on whose account my daughter is thus perverse. Sirrah ! Sir, how dare you shew yourself within these walls ?

WHIMSICULO.

Upon my word, my Lord, it was very unintentional. I didn't mean to *shew* myself—I only wished to execute my commission,

CURVOSO.

You did, eh ? And, pray, Sir, what *is* your commission ?

WHIMSICULO.

A secret one, my Lord : failing in the object of it ought not to lower me in your Lordship's estimation. My wishes were as ardent as if I had succeeded,

CURVOSO.

Here's a pretty scoundrel ! Give up the letter you have dared to undertake the delivery of—and after you have been bastinadoed, and tossed in a blanket, I may, perhaps, permit your departure.

WHIMSICULO.

However inviting such terms of capitulation may appear to you, my Lord, honour forbids me to accept them. Any property of *mine* you are welcome to, as the Marquis is to his own livery again ; but this letter, till in the hands of the Lady Constantia, belongs to my master, and with all possible submission, I hope you'll give me leave to fight in defence of the trust reposed in me as long as I have breath in my body.

CURVOSO.

CURVOSO.

And this is your real determination?

WHIMSICULO.

With all possible submission it is, even though little Hercules here should except against it.

CURVOSO.

The most polite ruffian I ever met. Seize him, and—

MARQUIS.

Hold, Count—this affair belongs to me; first, because my livery has been assumed, and, secondly, because he belongs to my rival. To shew how little I fear such under-hand pretensions, I beg he may be permitted to deliver the letter to your daughter.

CURVOSO.

Why, it certainly will lessen the pleasure of reading it, when she knows nobody cares whether she reads it, or no. But, then, how shall we punish this caitiff's insolence?

WHIMSICULO.

I shall be sufficiently punished by an office so much beneath my talents. My ambition is to overcome difficulties: but, to deliver a letter openly is the business only of a post, a porter, or a running footman.

MARQUIS.

We will not degrade ourselves with conversation so much beneath us. Manikin, tell that saucy companion, had his master been here, he would have met reprobation from me, his equal: but, as his paltry

paltry representative, do you dismiss him ; the tail of a lion can only be used to brush away a gnat.

[*Exeunt all but Whimsicula and Manikin.*

**MANIKIN** (*To Whimsicula, with great politeness.*)

Signior, you have heard my Lord's commands. You may depart, after delivering your letter, or not, just as you please. Pray, go, Sir—I should be sorry to stoop to any indignity, but—

**WHIMSICULO.**

But what, my valiant tail of a lion ?

**MANIKIN.**

You must permit me to shew you the door.

**WHIMSICULO.**

Certainly ; and you must also permit me to say—

**MANIKIN.**

What, Sir ?

**WHIMSICULO.**

That if ever I catch you on the other side of it, I'll let you know that brushing gnats off a lion may sometimes prove a dangerous employment.

[*Exeunt.*

**SCENE III.—Another part of the castle.**

*Enter Floretta.*

**FLORETTA.**

If my eyes don't deceive me, that dear rogue Whimsicula is now in the castle, but then, if he is, what business can he have in the service of the Marquis ? If he has joined against my poor Lady, and deserted his generous master, why there's an end—I've done with him ; for he can never be true

in

in love, who is mean enough to be guilty of ingratitude.

*Enter MANIKIN.*

MANIKIN.

Ah, ah! pray, young Lady, is it not you I have had the honour to see in attendance on the happy woman who is destined for the Marquis?

FLORETTA (*Crossly*).

No.

MANIKIN.

No! why, surely you belong to the Lady Constantia?

FLORETTA.

I know that; but she's neither a happy woman, nor is she destined for the Marquis.

MANIKIN.

She will have him, I believe.

FLORETTA.

Aye; but she don't like him, I believe.

MANIKIN.

And why not?

FLORETTA.

For the same reason that I don't like you, perhaps.

MANIKIN.

And, what may that reason be, child?

FLORETTA.

Child, indeed! Why, because she likes somebody else; and one that's more of a man, child.

(*Mimicking.*)

MANIKIN.

MANIKIN.

I know who you mean—one Orlando—and you have chosen his servant—a fellow that I had the honour to turn out of the palace—and I hope, most sincerely, he'll never come in again. (*Aside.*)

(WHIMSICULO enters unobserved in a riding dress, with a whip.)

FLORETTA.

You! you turn my Whimsiculo out?

MANIKIN.

I did, by my reputation, before twenty witnesses. He was inclined to resist, but I made him know his man, and with the greatest coolness and politeness, says I—“Signior, what's your name, I—”

(WHIMSICULO faces him.)

I hope I have the honour of seeing you in perfect health. (*Trembling.*)

WHIMSICULO.

What business has the tail of a lion so far off from the august body it is its place to be dangling after?

MANIKIN (*endeavouring to slip by*).

Sir, I—the Marquis—I wish you a good morning, Madam.

FLORETTA.

Good morning, child.

WHIMSICULO (*imitating MANIKIN's former manner*).

Don't be alarm'd, Sir—I should be sorry to stoop to any indignity, but—.

MANIKIN.

Bu—but—wha—what—Sir?

WHIMSICULO,

WHIMSICULO (*taking him by the nose*).

You must permit me to shew you the door. Pray go, Sir, or you may find that this little strip of the hide of a bull, (*Cracking his whip,*) may be applied with effect, even to the tail of a lion. [Exit Manikin.] My dear, Floretta, in my zeal to serve my master, I have been too cunning for myself. However, by a strange whim of the old folks, I am allowed to send this letter to your Lady; and I hope it will afford her some consolation; though I should think a letter from *me* to you, instead of a visit, would prove a very poor substitute.

FLORETTA.

Don't be vain—should my Lady marry the old Marquis—

WHIMSICULO.

She'll not be the woman I take her for—and this will then be no place for *you*. My master, however disappointed himself, will be happy to reward your services, by giving you—

FLORETTA.

What?

WHIMSICULO.

My hand.

FLORETTA.

You would fain persuade me that he's very generous.

WHIMSICULO.

So he is: he gave your mistress a beautiful bird, which, though but artificially made, sings like a real nightingale. Then its eyes are diamonds, and its notes—

FLORETTA.

## THE CABINET;

FLORETTA.

Nonsense! I like it, because its made of rich materials, and came in a most elegant and expensive cabinet.

WHIMSICULO.

True; in that *case* its notes might be accepted by any one.

FLORETTA.

But I tell you it's always mute, unless you touch a secret spring, to set its wings and tongue going.

WHIMSICULO.

What a blessing if every married man had such a spring on the tongue of his wife! Though it's odds if it did not sometimes rest for want of use.

FLORETTA.

Pretty encouragement for me!

WHIMSICULO.

In spite of which you shall be mine. Your father shall be transplanted along with you, like a fine old oak, as he is; and you and I will be a pair of honey-suckles, to twine round, and adorn his venerable trunk.

FLORETTA.

If my father's old trunk, as you call it, is never to be embellished till I look for happiness in deserting those who have been good to me, it will wither unadorned, I promise you.

WHIMSICULO.

Your father's a good fellow, and so are you—So fear not but all will end as it should do.

DUET—WHIMSICULO and FLORETTA.

WHIM. Never think of meeting sorrow,

Grief, perhaps, may miss his way;

Or,

## A COMIC OPERA.

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Or, if doom'd to fret to-morrow,  
Let's not lose our laugh to-day.

BOTH. Never think, &c.

FLORETTA. Yet, when those we love are crying,  
Surely that must spoil your mirth;  
To their tears, our tears replying,  
Friendship, then, gives sorrow birth.

BOTH. Never think, &c.

WHIM. Sand will sink, while pleasure's mounted,  
Time your joys may undermine;  
Give me, if time must be counted,  
Minute glasses, fill'd with wine.

BOTH. Never think, &c.

### WHIMSICULO.

One kiss, my dear Floretta, and then——I've a serious word to say to you.

### FLORETTA.

There. (*He kisses her.*) Now, what is this serious word.

### WHIMSICULO.

Now may you observe how much *profession* is apt to outrun *performance*. You have done nothing but talk of the great love you bear your mistress; and here have you been singing and laughing, while she is waiting in the utmost anxiety for the poor neglected letter, that quietly reposes in her dear friend's pocket.

### FLORETTA.

Why you good-for-nothing fellow, if my Lady wasn't waiting, as you are pleased to remind me, I'd let *you* know that—that I won't stay another minute in such company. [Exit.

THE CABINET;

WHIMSICULO.

That's a good creature enough; but rather a little inclined to—

*Re-enter FLORETTA.*

You needn't try to see me again before you go; without you've something very particular to say.

[*Exit.*]

WHIMSICULO.

Very well, Floretta. I wish the Lady had the letter though.

*Re-enter FLORETTA.*

FLORETTA.

If my Lady should wish to write an answer, you'd better stop till its ready.

WHIMSICULO.

Which, if I may judge by your haste, will be a plaguy long while first.

FLORETTA.

Well, there—now I am gone in earnest. [*Exit.*]

WHIMSICULO.

So, here comes another lover—I've a letter for *him* too.—It should have been delivered sooner, but Floretta and I seem to agree in opinion that, however other folks may be waiting and expecting, there's nothing out of nature in serving our own turn first.

*Enter LORENZO.*

LORENZO.

I have been looking all over the castle for you. Is it possible you bring no token from my Leonora?

WHIM.

WHIMSICULO.

Quite impossible, my Lord; and you shou'd have had this sooner, but Floretta, that coaxing hussley, is so plaguy anxious on her Lady's account, that she kept me chattering and fooling— (*Feeling for the letter.*)

LORENZO.

What cou'd you find to talk about, when you had business of such consequence entrusted to you?

WHIMSICULO.

Ask that letter, my Lord; (*Gives it;*) and if it don't explain why people negle&t every thing else to talk upon one subject, the Lady Leonora knows less of penwomanship than I imagine.

LORENZO.

Here's for thy pains. (*Gives money.*) And now, (*Kissing the letter,*) for all the happiness that absence can bestow on me.

WHIMSICULO (*Looking at the money.*).

If Cupid was to regulate the mail, what a wonderful increase of revenue it wou'd bring in. [Exit.

LORENZO.

The pangs of past absence will give double zest to the pleasures of our meeting: for what can heighten the enjoyments of love like the sorrows that precede them.

SONG—LORENZO.

Fortune may frown, but the true lover's breast  
Has a cordial for sorrow, however distrest,  
Beloved and beloved, still pleasure he meets,  
And the bitters of love only heighten the sweets.

## II.

Rivals may threaten, misfortunes arise,  
 The heart of affection misfortune defies;  
 True pleasure was ne'er by despondency gain'd,  
 For beauty's most priz'd, when by danger obtain'd. [Exit.]

**SCENE IV.—Constantia's apartment, containing a rich cabinet—Superb china jars, &c.—The door of the cabinet shut.**

(Constantia discovered, looking on a picture.)

CONSTANTIA.

Heigho! this portrait—these presents—this beautiful bird— (Opening the doors of the cabinet, which contains a seat, and above it a beautiful artificial bird,) were all the gifts of Orlando's prosperity.

Enter FLORETTA.

FLORETTA.

My dear Lady, I bring you comfort. In the first place, here is a letter from Orlando.

CONSTANTIA.

Comfort indeed! What else, my dear Floretta?

FLORETTA.

Your father is resolved you shall be married directly.

CONSTANTIA.

Do you call that comfort?

FLORETTA.

Yes, I do; because sudden resolutions are seldom lasting. Your father and the Marquis are coming.

CONSTANTIA.

What shall I do, Floretta?

FLORETTA.

FLORETTA.

As you *please*, Ma'am—it's the privilege of ladies ;  
but I, who am only a maid, should *run away*.

CONSTANTIA.

How ! to Orlando ?

FLORETTA.

O, no, not if you chuse to marry the Marquis.

CONSTANTIA.

Never. On this feast, sanctioned by a father's presence, I received Orlando's vows, and here, by all these tokens of his love, I swear—

FLORETTA.

Don't swear, but listen. Bread, water, and a nunnery are pleasures to what your father threatens. He has sent for the chaplain, and will have the ceremony performed to-night.

CONSTANTIA.

I cannot elope. What, if I conceal myself till my father relents.

FLORETTA.

He never does relent. He's coming here. If you will hide, let me shut you up in this cabinet—the blinds are only silk—you may hear all that passes; and make up your mind as circumstance directs.

MARQUIS (*Without*).

Come, my dear Count, I'm all impatience.

FLORETTA.

Hark ! Do, do, pray, let me advise you to act with spirit.

## THE CABINET;

CONSTANTIA.

Should your advice prove wrong—

FLORETTA.

It would be the more extraordinary, that a young woman in love shou'dn't take it.

COUNT (*Without*).

Where is this perverse, this headstrong—

CONSTANTIA.

They come. Mind Floretta, it isn't my wish that you shou'd make any plan for my escape—but if you think, and if— (*Going into the cabinet.*)

FLORETTA.

No ifs, but hide a moment, and leave the rest to me.

CONSTANTIA.

Besides, I have sworn never to part from this cabinet.

FLORETTA.

And one would think you had sworn never to go into it. Pray, Madam, shut the door. The key's on my side—and as I wou'dn't have my plot spoil'd for the world, you must remain a prisoner at my discretion.—And, now, if I don't shew more love for my Lady than ever Whimsicula did for his master, set me down for the greatest blockhead of the two.

*Enter CURVOSO and the MARQUIS.*

CURVOSO.

Now, Floretta, where's my daughter?

FLORETTA.

She's—she's locked up, Sir.

CURVOSO.

CURVOSO.

Locked up, hussay ! how do you mean ?

FLORETTA.

In meditation, Sir, not a little puzzled to guess the end of this busineſs.

CURVOSO.

She wont be puzzled long.—Call her hither—call her, I say.

FLORETTA.

I mustn't, my Lord—considering what is intended—it would be cruel.

MARQUIS.

How so, damsel ?

FLORETTA.

I heard his Lordship, the Count, fay, that as he had been so often reproached about the presents he had suffered his daughter to receive from Orlando, he intended to get rid of the obligation, by fending them all back.

CURVOSO.

So I do.—Whatever his circumstances were, he cannot now afford to make presents, and ought to be much obliged to me for what I shall return him.

MARQUIS.

No doubt he will, my Lord ; and I wou'dn't retain a single article.

FLORETTA.

If you don't fend all, you will do nothing. If you wait for my Lady, you do wrong. This sight shou'd be spared her—she is at present in the dark about it, and I think she ought to be kept so.

## THE CABINET;

MARQUIS.

You're right—you're a sensible girl, and shall wear this in token of my good opinion. (*Giving a ring.*)

CURVOSO.

Who waits there?

*Enter a Servant.*

Call all the servants of the palace, and send that saucy fellow, Whimsicula, here immediately.

[*Exit Servant.*

MARQUIS.

The ornaments of this apartment are elegant.

CURVOSO.

Too much so.—That cabinet, and many of the gewgaws you behold, were the gifts of Orlando. In that case is a curious mechanical singing bird. Floretta, have you the key?

FLORETTA.

The key, my Lord! If I had, nobody can make the bird in that cage sing but my Lady.

SONG—FLORETTA.

The bird, in yonder cage confined,  
Sings but to lovers, young and true;  
Then pray approach if you can find (*To Marquis.*)  
The picture suit—Ah! no, not you.

Good nature only wakes the lay,  
A parent kind thefeat may do;  
Then pray approach if you can say, (*To Curvoso,*)  
The picture suits—Ah! no, not you.

*Enter WHIMSICULO and Porters.*

CURVOSO (*To Whimsiculo.*)

Now, Sir, you may return, and, that I may not be called ungenerous, you shall not go empty handed.

handed. Porters, take hence that cabinet, with the pretty bird it contains, and whatever else was sent here by the Prince Orlando. Take them to his own frontiers, and there leave them.

## WHIMSICULO.

Now, this will vex my master more than all.  
*(Aside.)* But, Sir, the Prince will doubt his right to receive back his own gifts, unless the Lady Constantia be also willing to send them.

## CURVOSO.

I'll answer for her—Go tell him, whatever is here I give him freely with all my heart and soul.

## MARQUIS.

And I, too, upon my honour.

## WHIMSICULO.

My Lord, my Lord, on my knee I intreat, don't send back the bird—Lady Constantia vowed never to part with it. She took the whole calendar to witness that where she went it shou'd go with her—And if you persist, she'll break her vow, and Orlando will break my bones for bringing the news of it.

## FLORETTA.

That's a trifle—don't listen to him, my Lord.

## WHIMSICULO.

He'll go distracted. Who could advise this refinement upon cruelty?

## FLORETTA.

I did; and very clever advice it was.

## WHIMSICULO.

Witch! sorceress! how I could beat thee, now!

## THE CABINET;

MARQUIS.

We are all, however, very much obliged to her.

CURVOSO.

And thus I reward her.—Take this purse, follow your fellow and his master's trumpery, and never let me see thee more.

FLORETTA.

My Lord ! why this is beyond what I expected.

CURVOSO.

Not a word, hypocrite.—I know thou wou'd'nt deceive me if thou cou'd'st.

FLORETTA.

If ever I wish'd to deceive your Lordship more than I do at this moment, never trust woman again.

CURVOSO.

I won't trust *thee*, depend on't. I get rid of these presents to put Orlando out of thy lady's head ; and I part with thee, that thou may'st never attempt to bring him back again.

FINALE.

FLOR. &amp; WHIM. Hear us, my Lord !

CURVOSO. I'll hear no more.

Begone ! for ever quit my sight !

Listen !

I wont—your reign is o'er,  
To all your tricks now bid good night.

Only a moment.

WHIMSICULO. March away !

CURV. &amp; MARQ. Pr'ythee now stop !

GUARDS. We dare not stay.

ALL. Since { we } must go, let's part like friends.  
{ you }

Farewell !—good bye—I've gain'd my ends —

Then,

## A COMIC OPERA.

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Then, since what happens *must*, let's trip it away,  
And shout as we march, huzza ! huzza !

(They march off triumphantly with the cabinet.)

[*Exeunt Marquis, Count and Manikin, on the opposite side.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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## A C T II.

SCENE I.—*A garden surrounding Orlando's Palace.*

*Enter two ATTENDANTS.*

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Well, Baptista, is Signior Whimsicolo come back?

SECOND ATTENDANT.

No ; and till he does, I dread to meet the Prince.  
he goes pining and moping about, and then flies  
into such passions, that, mercy on us ! sooner than  
fall in love, I—

FIRST ATTENDANT.

Hold your tongue, and stand aside ; for here he comes.

ORLANDO enters, attended.

ORLANDO.

Has no one seen the messenger I sent to the Count Curvosof?

SECOND ATTENDANT.

He is not yet return'd my Lord.

ORLANDO.

## THE CABINET;

## ORLANDO.

Send out to meet him, and let me have instant notice of his arrival. [*Exeunt Attendants.*] A truce with my enemy has left me time to devote to the thoughts of my dear Constantia. Why hasn't my herald the wings of love, to bring his impatient master the tidings of her welfare?

## AIR—ORLANDO.

When absent from her whom my soul holds most dear,  
What medley of passions invade !  
In this bosom what anguish, what hope, and what fear,  
I endure for my beautiful maid.  
  
In vain I seek pleasure to lighten my grief,  
Or quit the gay throng for the shade ;  
Nor pleasure nor solitude yield me relief  
When away from my beautiful maid.

## Enter DORALICE.

## DORALICE.

There he is, ever melancholy and discontented. Son-in-law ! son-in-law ! were I a young man of your quality, how differently would I pass my time ! If you are as recluse in the camp as you are at home, I don't wonder at the prosperity of our enemies.

## ORLANDO.

They are about to listen to reason. My brave people have at last been successful.—They followed me to the field with enthusiasm.—They were sure to conquer, for they loved their master.—Their victory was honourable, for they fought for peace.

## DORALICE.

Now, if I was a young man, I should hate peace. Oh ! you don't take after your father—nothing ever

made your poor father sad—his first wife, your mother, was, indeed, the reverse—she was always sighing and dying, without any earthly reason to be given for it.

ORLANDO.

The parent you mention gave me life at the expense of her own. Her memory is sacred, and, not even the tongue of a step-mother must profane it.

DORALICE.

There it is now—step-mother again! I, who have been in the place of a real parent to you, I always procured you wholesome correction when a boy, and now you are a man have wearied myself to provide a matrimonial establishment for your sole adyantage.

ORLANDO.

If you allude to the lady invited to your court, on my account, I can only thank you, and decline her offers.

DORALICE.

And, can you persist in asking for Constantia when she has first been promised, and then so insolently refused you?

ORLANDO.

The cause of that refusal is no more—my possessions restored, and again in safety, will remove the objections of Curvoſo.

*Enter LEONORA.*

LEONORA.

My dear brother, your messenger is in sight. He is followed by a kind of cavalcade, and, perhaps, brings

## THE CABINET;

brings intelligence that may prove agreeable. See, he enters the court-yard at this moment.

DORALICE.

With more of the Count's impertinence, I warrant him.

ORLANDO.

He comes; nor shall his honest haste go unrewarded.

*Enter WHIMSICULO.*

WHIMSICULO.

Oh, my Lord! I've almost ridden my steed to death, and myself out of all moderate respiration, to tell you—

ORLANDO.

What? Speak!

WHIMSICULO.

That it's all over with us. Your presents to the Princess are all sent back—her father is more averse to you than ever, and an obstinate old Marquis is in complete possession of the citadel.

ORLANDO.

And Constantia?

WHIMSICULO.

Nobody knows what's become of her—Florella says that she's locked up: but that's not the worst of it.

ORLANDO.

What more? Quick!

WHIMSICULO.

Why, that Princess of all perfidy, that villainous chambermaid I have just mentioned, has advised the

Count

Count to this very step, and lost my heart and her place as a reward for her treachery.

ORLANDO.

Peace, coxcomb!

DORALICE.

It's just as I prophesied. I'm impatient to go, and see to what lengths your extravagance has led you, and what the Count's hauteur has induced him to return upon your hands. [Exit.

ORLANDO.

Let none presume to touch the presents till they are safely lodged in my apartments. (*Going.*)

WHIMSICULO.

But, my Lord, consider that though I took all possible pains to—

ORLANDO.

Away, ill-omen'd bird—I'll to the Count myself—If he persists, this rival, this Marquis shall repent his rash—by daring to step between Orlando and his love. [Exit.

WHIMSICULO.

I knew the storm must light upon somebody; and I consider myself not a little indebted to the Marquis, for being so likely to bear the brunt of it. (*Going.*)

LEONORA (*Stopping him.*).

Whimsiculo.

WHIMSICULO.

Hey!

LEONORA.

Did you bring an answer for me?

WHIMSICULO.

'Slud! I beg a million of pardons, but I'd like to have

have forgot.—No, my Lady, I brought no answer for you.

LEONORA.

What, not a line?

WHIMSICULO.

Not a line. My Lord Lorenzo read your letter, and said, that as to writing an answer, there was no occasion for it, because—

LEONORA.

Because what?

WHIMSICULO.

I don't know, truly; but, perhaps, it might be, because he was coming himself; for so he has done, and is now waiting permission to pay his respects to you.

LEONORA.

Indeed! my dear Whimsiculo, how shall I ever be able to repay you for such delightful intelligence.

(*Gives money.*)

WHIMSICULO.

Here's a change of weather! Egad, I believe a messenger in love's business partakes of the nature of the camelion, not because he lives upon air, for here are substantial proofs to the contrary, (*Shaking the purse,*) but, because he changes colour, according to the different lights you view him in. Thus, my master calls me an owl—now my Lady changes my feathers to a brighter tint, and makes a *goldfinch* of me.

LEONORA.

Haste to bring Lorenzo, and be what thou wilt.

WHIMSICULO.

## WHIMSICULO.

I had better continue a bird ; for then I shall have wings, as well as inclination, to fly to serve you. [Exit.

## LEONORA.

Fly as thou wilt, it cannot be too fast upon this errand, I promise thee.

## SONG.—LEONORA.

Turn minutes to seconds, that Time may go by  
 On pinions more rapid and light ;  
 Let his age change to youth, that he faster may fly,  
 'Till he brings my dear lover in sight !  
 Yet, ah ! when he comes, let each moment be slow,  
 Ere alone I am left to complain,  
 Let minutes like hours deliberate flow,  
 And age steal on Time once again.

[Exit.]

SCENE II.—*A gallery in the same Palace.*

Enter FLORETTA.

## FLORETTA.

Well, here we are arrived.—I had much ado to persuade my Lady to this journey of two or three miles.—But, now she has the key, and I am to keep within call—Oh ! here comes the prince.—He is unacquainted as yet, I see, with Constantia's visit, and I'll teize him a little.

Enter ORLANDO.

Ah, my Lord, have you been to see the rejected proofs of love, that your mistress's generosity has returned ?

## ORLANDO.

Can it be true, Floretta ; all sent back ?

## FLORETTA.

## FLORETTA.

It's true indeed, my Lord.—The old Count was determin'd to leave nothing behind you could set any value upon.

## ORLANDO.

Distraction!

## FLORETTA.

Don't talk about distraction; but fly to the presents she once accepted, as if it was herself who waited to receive you.

## DUET.

ORLANDO. Ah! could I hope my fair to see!

FLORETTA. Haste, then, and hope to find her;

ORLANDO. No hope—Alas! she's flown from me,

FLORETTA. Indeed! then never mind her.

The bird that sings from yonder cage

ORLANDO. To me sings notes of sorrow,

And adds new transports to my rage,

FLORETTA. You'll change your note to-morrow.

[Exit Orlando.]

## FLORETTA.

There he goes, to look mournfully over his rejected presents, and to frown on a cabinet, which contains all that is dear to him in the world. My saucy sweetheart too is, as yet, deceived, and passed me, just now, with such a scornful elevation of his lip and nose, that, ecod! I ran away for fear of a scolding. Here he comes, I believe—no; as I live, it's my father.

*Enter PETER (Agitated).*

## PETER.

You're right, wench, it is your father, unless your mother had as little regard for me as you seem to have.

FLORETTA.

Why, father, when I took leave of you in the castle, and said, you shou'd soon know my reasons for quitting it, who expected to meet you here? I'm so happy—we're all going to be happy, and nothing is wanting, but your company, to make our ~~fe-~~<sup>ty</sup> ~~l~~icity complete.

PETER.

I'm sorry for it; for I'm determin'd never to settle again in castles or in palaces.—I've been a sailor, and I've been a landsman; I've measur'd the ocean, and travell'd the shore.—Talk of longitude and latitude! give me the man who can discover *gratitude*, for I have been looking for it all my life, without ever having been able to meet it.

FLORETTA.

I hope, father, *I* have not been ungrateful.

PETER.

You are out of the question. Look ye, girl, when the old Count was travelling in England, I saved his life at the hazard of my own. He fell into a mill-stream, and though I broke my arm in the attempt, I fished him safe out of the water, as if I had been a Newfoundland dog.

FLORETTA.

Why the whole castle knows it, father. I'm sure I hav'n't forgot how often the Count himself has told us of it.

PETER.

If you hav'n't forgot, he has. The services of old Peter are no longer thought of; and the Count

has left his memory in the mill-stream, from which I snatch'd him.

FLORETTA.

Ah! I see now, what vexes you. You are displeased at his turning me from the castle; but, indeed I wish'd it.—It has done my dear lady a service.

PETER.

Your lady has done wrong.—She has eloped from her father. He reproached me with being in the plot, and the young powder-monkey who puffs the Marquis, had the impudence to join in the accusation.

FLORETTA.

And could any one listen to him?

PETER.

Not long; for I knock'd him down. I did it to save him a beating; he is but a boy, and if I had heard him say much more, I might have half kill'd the poor devil.

FLORETTA.

But the Count—

PETER.

Was in such a rage for the loss of his daughter, he cou'dn't distinguish friend from foe—I'm out of patience when I think of it. What a fool, and what a rogue a man must be, to put himself in a passion, when he knows—I wonder I didn't knock him down too, as well as the young civet cat.

FLORETTA.

Compose yourself.

PETER.

Compose the devil! I tell you the old Marquis insisted

insisted on satisfaction for the blow I gave his page, and, ecod, I'd have given it him too ; but, wou'd you believe it, the Count joined against me.—Against me, who have saved him from the robberies of his servants, the extravagance of his friends, and have taken part against his enemies these five and twenty years.

## FLORETTA.

Dear, dear, Sir ?

## PETER.

Against me, who left my country to oblige him—Great Britain, hussey ! — What could a man do more? I left a land of honest, plain, well-feeding fellows, to live among a race of Parmasan cheese-scrapers, who hav'n't common sense enough to speak plain English !

## FLORETTA.

Well, but you know, father—

## PETER.

And then he said—that hurt me more than all the rest.—What do you think he had the cruelty to say? Why, “ that you must be accessory to your lady's flight, and that you were dismissed his house for intrigue and dishonesty.”

## FLORETTA.

If you'll only hear—

## PETER.

Cou'dn't put up with that, you know, Floretta. We cou'dn't both remain in the same house, after such a charge. So, as I cou'dn't kick him out of his own castle, why, I came away myself, to where you

said I might hear<sup>t</sup> of you. And, as you promised to send me good reasons for coming here—you have now an opportunity to tell 'em yourself.

FLORETTA.

Indeed, father, I can explain all. My lady is here in the palace with Orlando.—I attend on her, and what will surprize you most is, that the Count himself sent her here.

PETER.

I'm too cunning an old fish to be caught so. The strides I took to get out of the Count's ten acres of territory, were too long, and too rapid for any such thing to have happen'd in my absence; nay, do you blush? Surely it cannot be true? If you *have* been guilty, Floretta, consider the crime—consider the wickedness of deceiving those in whose service we are employed, paid, and protected.

FLORETTA.

I do consider it, father; and for that very reason I'll stick close to the interests of my lady to the last hour of my being.

PETER.

So, so! the interests of your lady! I fear'd as much—and if it proves as I suspect—what a bad girl!

*Enter WHIMSICULO.*

WHIMSICULO.

A bad girl indeed! That I'll be sworn she is; and the worst of bad girls, for—

PETER (*Turning upon Whimsiculo*).

How do you know she is? How dare you call my daughter a bad girl?

WHIMSICULO.

## WHIMSICULO.

Why, I'll tell your daughter's father so to his face. I say she has betrayed her mistress, turn'd traitress to my master, and been bribed by the old Count, to espouse the cause of the Marquis.

## PETER.

And, I say—for I read guilt in her eyes—she has cheated the Count, and been aiding and abetting in Constantia's elopement.

## FLORETTA.

And what the deuce shall poor *I* say? However, father, as you are the only judge, whose authority I acknowledge, I will, to *you*, plead guilty.—But pray hear the circumstances.

## WHIMSICULO.

Ay, come, now for it.

## FLORETTA.

My lady was in the cabinet, which contains her curious bird. Her father didn't know it, and insisted on sending it back to Orlando—I dared not contradict him, because he was in such a fury—she dared not come out, for fear of making him worse—so we were both sent packing together. The Prince, by this time, knows she is in the palace, and, I dare say, does not repent that my master sent away his daughter in the wrong box.

## WHIMSICULO.

Tol, rol, de riddle lol! Floretta, my dear Floretta, I beg ten thousand pardons. Peter, you and I will have an English hornpipe. The Marquis will go

mad with vexation—my master with joy—and you shall be immortalized (*To Floretta*) for being one of the cleverest cabinet ministers that ever appeared in petticoats.

## PETER.

Floretta, when you can make a proper defence, you'll find me at the cottage of old Bianca, the widow of poor Dragnetti, the fisherman.

## FLORETTA.

Nay; but pray take me with you, Sir.

## PETER.

Stay with your lady. Since you have gone so far, it would be double blame to forsake her. For me, I'll neither return to the Count, nor remain with you. I'll seek my subsistence in the bottom of the lake, and, unless I meet with another half-drown'd Italian, there's no fear of living merrily.

[*Exeunt Floretta and Peter.*

## WHIMSICULO.

Floretta is a good girl, after all, and I'll follow my master's example, and marry!—Marry! Egad, there's something so awful in the thoughts of that merry solemnity, that I hardly know how to make up my mind to it.

## SONG—WHIMSICULO.

A bachelor leads an easy life,

Few folks that are wed live better:

A man may live well with a very good wife,

But the puzzle is, how to get her.

For there's pretty good wives, and there's pretty bad wives,

And wives neither one thing nor t'other,  
And as for the wives who scold all their lives,

I'd sooner wed Adam's grandmother.

Then

Then ladies and gents, if to marriage inclin'd,  
 May deceit or ill humour ne'er trap ye,  
 May those who are single get wives to their mind,  
 And those who are married live happy.

## II.

Some chuse their ladies for ease or for grace,  
 Or a pretty turn'd foot as they're walking ;  
 Some chuse 'em for figure, and some for face,  
 But very few chuse 'em for talking.  
 Now, as for the wife I could follow through life,  
 'Tis she who can speak sincerely,  
 Who, not over nice, can give good advice,  
 And love a good husband dearly.  
 So ladies and gents, when to wedlock inclin'd,  
 May deceit or ill humour ne'er trap ye ;  
 May those who are single find wives to their mind,  
 And those who are married live happy.

[Exit.]

**SCENE III.—*The prince's chamber.—The cabinet on one side.—Orlando discovered, throws a picture on the table, and comes forward.***

## ORLANDO.

Yes!—all return'd. Even my picture, which she swore to keep, sent back, without a word, without a line to soften undeserved severity.

(Constantia opens the cabinet, unobserv'd by Orlando, and changes the picture for another—Orlando continues speaking.)

If she has joined against me, why shou'd I seek her father's castle, to be the scorn, perhaps of a detested rival? Or, if she loves him; love him! 'tis impossible! Constantia can never forget her vows to the original of (Going to take the picture, he perceives the change.) Hah! why, this is witchcraft! Even now,

it was my own portrait I placed here—and this—this is the beloved image of Constantia! Speak, mimic wonder! for thou must be the agent of some power, friendly to my love.—Tell me what means—  
(*The bird sings.—The cabinet opens, and Constantia comes forward.*) Constantia! my dear Constantia! to what miracle am I indebted for this excess of happiness?

## CONSTANTIA.

Floretta can best explain: yet, pleased as I am, I fear my acquiescence in a plan, which I did not, at first, comprehend, may expose me to the most cruel censure.

## ORLANDO.

Let me fly to your father—his abode is near, remain 'till my return, and, trust me, I'll bring a parent's sanction to our union.

## CONSTANTIA.

And why do you suppose that he will prove less inexorable now than formerly.

## ORLANDO.

Because I have recovered the wealth and dominions he so dearly prizes. Besides, your return, otherwise than the bride of him to whom he sent you—

## CONSTANTIA.

Hold, Orlando! I tremble at the thought.—Yes, in one inconsiderate moment, what have I risked!

## ORLANDO.

No one knows that you are here.

## CONSTANTIA.

## CONSTANTIA.

I have enemies, rivals, Orlando.—Women's eyes, pointed with jealousy, will pierce through adamant. My stay here, though but an hour, will expose my fame to the worst construction.

## ORLANDO.

Floretta, alone, shall have the key of the apartment—while locks and bars—

## CONSTANTIA.

Will but awake suspicion. And, when you are gone, I shall suffer a thousand fears. I know your stepmother dislikes me. I have heard of the violent temper of the Lady Crudelia, who aspires to your hand.—In short, I—I will accompany you.

## ORLANDO.

Retire to this apartment—no one shall approach you, but Floretta, whose signal shall be the singing of this bird. I will impart to her the three secret springs, which, when touched, at once awake its melody. When *I* return, three taps upon this door shall announce your lover.

## CONSTANTIA.

Some one approaches—on you I must now rely. The danger I have rashly sought teaches me to distrust myself. Go, and shou'd you succeed, do not place less value on a woman, whose only deviation from the forms of propriety, was caused by her affection for Orlando. (*Goes into the apartment.*)

## ORLANDO.

When I act not with honour, may love forsake  
me,

me. (*Closes the door.*) Never shall it be said that Orlando cou'd repay affection with perfidy.

## AIR.—ORLANDO.

Fair Ellen like a lilly grew,  
Was fortune's fav'rite flower,  
'Till falsehood chang'd her lovely hue,  
She wither'd in an hour.

Antonio in her virgin breast  
First rais'd a tender sigh,  
His wish obtain'd, the lover blest,  
Then left the maid to die.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.—*The garden of the palace.*

Enter CRUDELIA and CURIOSA.

## CURIOSA.

Now, my dear lady, why do you take on so? To be sure the Prince Orlando is a fine looking man, and so is the figure of Apollo, in the garden; but if one is as insensible and cold as the other, where can be the difference?

## CRUDELIA.

Orlando is cold only to me—another engrosses all his thoughts, while I, unpitied, may perish in the fires that consume me.

## CURIOSA.

You perish indeed! You, who have refused so many knights, that have fought with Orlando at tilts and tournaments, and all on your account. If it was me, Ma'am, I wou'dn't be in such a hurry to have the best of them; for the moment you accept one, you lose all the rest, which I know by sad experience.

## CRUDELIA.

CRUDELIA.

You, Curiosa !

CURIOSA.

I only meant, Ma'am, in the way of—that is—not that I ever accepted any of the fellows—I hate 'em—above all, I hate that Whimficulo almost as bad as I do the hussey he pretends to love. But, lud ! I don't mind that, and I always get in his way, whenever I can, to let him see as much.

CRUDELIA.

Ah ! Curiosa, what strange compositions we women are ! How often do we frown upon sincere affection to bend before the man who disregards us !

CURIOSA.

And isn't Orlando as perverse as the best woman in the world ? He pines after Constantia, because he can't get at her, and won't look at your ladyship, when he might have you for asking for.

CRUDELIA.

For asking for ?

CURIOSA.

O lud ! what have I said now ?

CRUDELIA.

My condescensions have encouraged too great a licence to a saucy tongue.

CURIOSA.

I beg pardon, madam ; I'm sure it only vexed me, that so sweet a tempered lady, and so fair—nay, Orlando thinks you fair ; for he said so. And he said, too, in my hearing, that he had never seen any lady with so beautiful a hand and arm.

CRUDELIA.

CRUDELIA.

Did he, my dear Curiosa? (*Looking at her hand.*)  
 I don't think this ring becomes my hand.—Here,  
 you may wear it. (*Gives it.*)

CURIOSA.

Generous lady! It becomes *mine* wonderfully.

CRUDELIA.

And did he really say—

CURIOSA.

I'll swear it, madam.—He said that, in point of complexion, and a pretty turned elbow, he never saw any but the Lady Constantia, who could equal you.

CRUDELIA.

Again Constantia! But why fear her? She will be wedded to the man she hates.—My secret influence introduced the Marquis, to thwart Orlando's love, and assisted his foes to despoil him of his lands, that I might have the glory to raise him from despair, and force him to acknowledge the affection of Crudelia.

CURIOSA.

Yes; and there's that impudent fellow, Whimficulo—Oh! how I should like to see him in despair, as your ladyship says; and, as for the hussey whom he calls his sweetheart, if she were in my power, she shou'd suffer the severest punishment, she shou'd be obliged to wear old clothes, and hold her tongue for the rest of her life.

CRUDELIA.

I would to heaven the latter penalty were inflicted on thyself.

Enter

*Enter DORALICE.*

My dear madam, I am preparing to quit your hospitable mansion, Orlando is lost to me for ever.

DORALICE.

Nothing is lost, Lady Crudelia, till it has been possess'd.—Come, I have hopes for you.—Orlando's presents are all returned, even his picture. He is in despair; and, when once Constantia is married, all your expectations may revive again.

CRUDELIA.

All sent back?

DORALICE.

All.—And among them a superb cabinet, a cabinet worth a dukedom. It holds a curious bird, which even *you* might take a pleasure in looking at, and listening to.

CURIOSA.

Pray, my lady, do go and see it. I'm sure I speak for your good.—Not that *I* have the least curiosity, only I'm sure it will divert you; and I wish you would take me along with you.

CRUDELIA.

As you will.—At all events, Constantia is no more successful than myself. But, were she wedded to Orlando, what would be sufficient to gratify my just revenge! [Exit.

DORALICE.

What a perplexing passion this love must be! Love indeed! I wish they were fairly married, and, then there wou'd be an end of it. [Exit.

CURIOSA.

CURIOSA.

If Whimsicolo continues to be as cruel to me as his master is to my mistress, there'll be an end to it one while, I'm positive. (*Going.*)

*Enter FLORETTA.*

FLORETTA.

Can't see a woman in the place that I like to ask a question of. Oh! there seems to be a pretty mild looking body enough. Signora, may I beg the favour to ask you, if you have seen the prince's gentleman this way?

CURIOSA (*Bridling*).

I never look at gentlemen, Signora.

FLORETTA.

Well; but I mean his attendant, Whimsicolo, I dare say you've seen *him*—a smart, pretty, genteel young man. I'm told he's rather like me.

CURIOSA.

So, so! this is some other rival. Like *you*! No, ugly as the fellow is, he's not so bad as that.

FLORETTA.

Ugly! Woman, do you call my Whimsicolo ugly?

CURIOSA.

Your's indeed! Why, your assurance exceeds that of the dowdy I've been told of. You're even worse than the artful Floretta, who would deprive me of my lawful intended husband.

FLORETTA.

Your intended husband! Your intentions are very arbitrary, Signora; and if Whimsicolo—

*Enter*

*Enter WHIMSICULO.*

WHIMSICULO.

Well, Floretta, I—Hey ! what's the matter ? Any thing amiss ?

FLORETTA.

Am iss indeed ! There's a Miss who seems to have some very kind intentions towards you, Sir.

CURIOSA.

Floretta ! So, so ! I'll command my rage.—Where the maid is, the mistress cannot be far off. My lady shall know of this, and if she takes my advice, she'll treat it with the cool contempt that I do. Oh, you 'vile hussey ! (*To Floretta.*) the time may come, when you shall tremble at the recollection of your past and present presumption. For you, Sir, it is not in your power to awake an atom of emotion in a bosom, which scorns to own—that—Oh ! Oh ! you barbarous, cruel, good-for-nothing—inhuman— (*Exit sobbing.*)

FLORETTA.

I'm petrified ! Pray, my dear young gentleman, who is that lady, who is so liberal of her benedictions ?

WHIMSICULO.

Who.—Why, she is.—Zooks ! never mind her. She's familiar to a devil of more consequence—of whom the less you know, the better.

FLORETTA.

But—

WHIMSICULO.

But here comes my master, and Signior Lorenzo, and

and the Lady Leonora ; so, pray, preserve your ifs and buts for another opportunity.

*Enter ORLANDO, LORENZO, and LEONORA.*

(*CURIOSA steals on and appears to listen.*)

ORLANDO.

Floretta, one word with you.

LORENZO.

My return, Leonora, will be speedy as Orlando's.

LEONORA.

And may it be equally crown'd with success !

ORLANDO.

Floretta, remember my instructions. Be careful of your lady, nor doubt my gratitude.

### QUINTETTE.

LOR. & LEON. Take, my love, this parting sigh,

ORLANDO. No fond adieu can I receive.

WHIM. Good bye, my lass !

FLORETTA. My lad, good bye !

OMNES. That we are constant, still believe.

LEON. & LOR. And, tho' the present tear may flow,  
And tho' with grief the bosom burn,

ORL. & LOR. Our joy it still shall be to know  
Soft pleasures wait our quick return.

ALL. Be parting sustain'd by the thoughts of the greeting,  
The smiles and the kisses,  
The heart-thrilling blisses,

Which Cupid prepares for our next merry meeting.

*Exit.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

## ACT III.

SCENE I.—Orlando's Apartment, with the Cabinet,  
as before.

(CUDELIA, CURIOSA, and DORALICE discovered.)

CRUDELIA.

Her attendant in the palace ! impossible !

CURIOSA.

I wish I could think so, madam ; but it's too true.—And I'm quite vexed on your account ; for I'm sure that rogue Whimsiculo paid all possible attention to her, and shewed as much fondness for the wench as his good-for-nothing master could have done for Constantia for the life of him.

DORALICE.

Perhaps she came only to return this finery in her mistress's name. See, this is the cabinet I told you of.

CURIOSA.

I overheard something about a secret spring, which the prince told Floretta was to be a signal. It's impossible it can be for any good, or I should have heard more distinctly.

CRUDELIA.

A secret spring ! (Goes eagerly to the cabinet.)

DORALICE.

Psha ! its only to make a bird sing, I dare say. Perhaps this is it. (Touches one of the handles.)

CRUDELIA.

Or this. (Touches another.)

CURIOSA.

Or this. (*The three having touched, the birds sing.*)

(Constantia comes out of the apartment.)

CONSTANTIA.

Floretta ! Ah ! then I am lost.

CRUDELIA.

Can it be possible ? Tell me, who art thou ?

CURIOSA.

The prettiest bird I ever saw in all my life.

CONSTANTIA.

I am Constantia, one whom thou dost hate and envy. (*To Crudelia.*)

CRUDELIA.

No ; thou art fallen beneath my envy. Once, indeed, the fair Constantia, holding Orlando in the chains of *virtue*, excited pangs unutterable ; but when I find a wanton concealed in this apartment, I may descend to *pity*, though I cannot *envy* her humility.

CURIOSA.

I always thought it would come to this. And, ten to one but that witch Floretta may be locked up in Whimficulo's clothes' chest.

(Crudelia whispers Curiosa who goes out.)

DORALICE (*To Constantia*).

This is my palace, madam : had I known the honour you intended, truly, your reception should have been suited to your merits.

CRUDELIA.

Can't thou say nothing to defend thyself.

CONSTANTIA.

## CONSTANTIA.

Against the opinions of disappointed jealousy, words would be useless *here*. I have no defence to offer, for, *unlike* you, I cannot *descend*. (*Going.*)

## CRUDELIA.

Stay, insolent ! Thou shalt repent most dearly, all my sorrows, while I, in turn, will triumph over thine.

## CONSTANTIA.

Mistaken woman, vice can never triumph. It may, awhile have power to *torment*; but every pang it dare inflict on fellow frailty is repaid by heaven's ample heavy retribution.

(*Four of Crudelia's Attendants enter with Curiosa.*) As you value my favour, keep that wretch secure. (*To her servants.*)

DORALICE (*Apart to Crudelia.*).

I begin to feel some terror, we may have gone too far. Prythee use gentleness. Keep her from Orlando if you will ; but do not hurt her—good my lady, do not.

## CURIOSA.

Shut her up, madam, in one of the cells of the castle till she may be sent back to her father, or wherever else your ladyship may please.

## CRUDELIA.

Italian rivals seldom deal so mildly with each other.—However, it shall be so.—Follow with your prisoner, who having dared contemn my power shall feel it.

CONSTANTIA.

I feel only for you.

CRUDELIA.

Fearest thou not death.

DORALICE (*Alarmed, and apart to Crudelia.*)  
No, no; not death?

CRUDELIA.

Fear'st thou not loss of fame? Will not busy malice proclaim it to the world, that Prince Orlando had a willing mistress, and that the proud Constantia died dishonoured.

CURIOSA.

Yes; there will be strange talking to a certainty.

CONSTANTIA.

That were, indeed, affliction. Take thy revenge, if it do seek my life, *that* I deserve, for I deceived my father. But, oh! in gentle pity, spare my name! Let not the world inscribe my tomb with guilt, nor think a mother's precepts were in vain.

CRUDELIA.

No more words.—Mark my directions.—Away!

DORALICE.

Nay, my dear lady, let me intercede—consider the anger of Orlando.

CRUDELIA.

Possession of her fate makes him my slave.—  
Away![*Exeunt all but Curiosa.*

CURIOSA.

It's a pity so charming a lady should be without an attendant.—I'll go and look for Floretta, and make

make her accompany her mistress out of pure good nature.  
[Exit.]

SCENE II.—*Curvooso's Palace.*

*Enter CURVOSO, ORLANDO and LORENZO.*

CURVOSO.

I'll hear no more excuses.—She has quitted her father, and your promise, on the word of a faithful knight, is broken. (*To Orlando.*)

ORLANDO.

My word is still sacred, my faith as a knight inviolate.

CURVOSO.

Did you not promise never to receive her, but from my hands?

ORLANDO.

Did you not send back the presents you had suffered her to accept.

*Enter the MARQUIS.*

MARQUIS.

Yes, he did. It was my counsel, and here I am to abide by the consequence.

ORLANDO.

You, Sir! But age is your protection.

CURVOSO.

Yes, I did send them back. All I sent you may keep, I never desire to see any part of it again.

MARQUIS.

Nor I either.

LORENZO.

In that cabinet you sent my sister, the Marquis agreed to send her, and when a man has the com-

mands of her father and the consent of his rival to espouse a mistress who is willing to be his, what can be wanting in the eye of propriety ?

CURVOSO.

Propriety indeed ! to tear her from the arms of a man of wealth and power to make her a princess without a portion !

ORLANDO.

I have, by conquest, regained my lands—To you I give them.—Leave me Constantia, and the rest is yours.

CURVOSO.

U—m— (*Remains in thought.*) Regained your lands ?

MARQUIS.

This is rather extraordinary. My Lord Curvoso, I do not exactly see that I am very well treated here.

CURVOSO.

Don't be in a passion :—it's an unbecoming thing. Don't you observe with what deliberation and propriety Orlando speaks ? He talks, even of his victories, with coolness and moderation, and gives me whole domains with as much ease as liberality.

MARQUIS.

So, so ! And do you mean to give your daughter to him ?

CURVOSO.

Hey ! No—there's no occasion for that.

ORLANDO.

My Lord !

CURVOSO.

CURVOSO.

Because he has her already—and I don't think it wou'd be at all right to take her away again.

ORLANDO.

Words can't express my gratitude.

MARQUIS.

Nor my disdain ! What interested apathy ! Good bye, old Moloch ! And, when next you would sacrifice your children to the God of Wealth, don't send for me to officiate at the altar.

ORLANDO (*To the Marquis*).

With you, my Lord, I have no further quarrel ; and can only say—

MARQUIS.

Say nothing—there's my hand.—No man of honour can really love a lady without wishing a successful rival at the devil. And that you may all share in the compliment is the parting wish of your very obedient humble servant.

[*Exit.*

CURVOSO.

Ods my life ! I'm glad he's gone. My two brave boys, give me both your hands.

LORENZO.

And may I hope, Sir, for your permission to marry Leonora ?

CURVOSO.

Mine ! Ask your brother the prince. His will shall be a law.

LORENZO.

With your leave, Sir ;—I know Orlando is impatient to impart these grateful tidings to Constantia.

## THE CABINET;

ORLANDO.

And Lorenzo no less so to inform Leonora of his happiness.

CURVOSO.

And I am as impatient as the best of you. Saddle all my horses—and don't let the wedding preparations be at a stand still.—And tell Peter.—Why where the devil is Peter all this time?

LORENZO.

I believe, my Lord—I beg pardon—I saw Peter at noon, and he mentioned having unwittingly incurred your displeasure.

CURVOSO.

Displeasure! I had forgot. Ah! Egad, I believe I might be in the wrong.—But I forgive him, a dog. Lorenzo, a word with you.—We'll return to your friend in an instant. I'll just go, and—if they don't make haste with the horses, I shall go out of my sences. [Exeunt Curvoſo and Lorenzo.

ORLANDO.

How tardy will seem the swiftest pace that guides me to Constantia!

SONG.—ORLANDO.

No more by sorrow chac'd, my heart  
 Shall yield to fell despair;  
 Now joy repels th' envenom'd dart,  
 And conquers every care.  
 So, in our woods the hunted boar,  
 On native strength relies;  
 The forests echo with his roar,  
 In turn the hunter flies.

[Exit.]

SCENE

SCENE III.—*Inside of Bianca's Cottage.*

PETER and BIANCA enter.

PETER.

Well, well, all is as it shou'd be. And I have not sought the shelter of thy cottage for nothing.

BIANCA.

Whush! softly, good Peter, softly! Constantia is now taking some repose in the inner apartment—and I warrant you she needs it sorely. Her life is saved to be sure; but, alack! her fine clothes are all spoiled, dry 'em how I wou'd.

PETER.

I'll not disturb her—I'll take a net, and down to the lake again—I may, perhaps, catch something for our supper. Your hospitality must not be repaid with idleness.

BIANCA.

Alack! there is little here worth paying for, and what there is, is all owing to thy bounty, good Peter. To be sure, tho' we've little or no meat in the house, we've plenty of fish, and are, heaven be thanked, as well provided for a fast-day as any Catholics in Christendom.—But go thy ways, throw thy net where thou wilt, and thou shalt catch no more such beautiful fish as thou hast brought home this evening. Heaven bless us! how I was surprised!

PETER.

For my part, widow, I have lived too long to be surprised at any thing. I once saved her father's life, and have now done as much by her, which I take

take to be a judgment upon the old Count for his ingratitude.

BIANCA.

A judgment! a blessing, Signior.—A blessing to you, to be the means of it.—And, above all, a blessing to a poor old woman, like me, to be, for once in my life, able to give a fellow-creature assistance.

PETER.

I say it is a judgment on the Count.

BIANCA.

Ay, ay; it is, as one may say, perfectly ominous. There is more hangs upon it than we are aware of, Signor.

PETER.

I know not what may hang on it; but it denotes that the Count's family are none of them born to be drown'd.

*Enter CONSTANTIA from an inner room.*

CONSTANTIA.

Ah, my dear hostess, why have you left me? You, too, good, generous man, to whom I am indebted for existence, how can the poverty of thanks repay you? Yet thanks are all I have—my own folly has put it from my power to be liberal, even to my life's preserver.

PETER.

Your thanks, my lady, belong to the providence that sent me to you. As for me, I cannot meet with any more ingratitude; for, whenever I may be lucky enough to act right, I shall only look for reward from my own conscience.

CONSTANTIA.

CONSTANTIA.

And can you fear that—

BIANCA.

My dear young lady, Peter is but a *mysterious* kind of a man, and speaks his mind *openly*; but he knows, as well as I, that if our food was gold, and our drink were diamonds, all shou'd be yours. So, sweet young lady, compose yourself.

CONSTANTIA.

Alas! you know not half my troubles. I have written to a friend who governs a neighbouring convent, I pray you conceal me till her friendship grants me the means of seclusion from this world and peace with heaven.

BIANCA.

Truly, it must be a great misfortune to seek peace with heaven at your age. But whatever you wish shall be done, and Peter shall carry the letter.

PETER.

And do you be cheerful, lady. As for your being concealed, depend on me—no one shall see you against your inclination.

CONSTANTIA.

This feems the only house upon the island. I have enemies you know not of. In making my escape from the hands of jealousy I fell from the window of my prison—the lake received me—you bore me to this hospitable island. Soon wou'd it be surrounded if my foes were apprized of my place of refuge.

PETER.

Never fear.—You have heard the country and profession your father took me from. And be asfurcd

sured that no one understands the defence of an island better than a British sailor, more especially when he protects the beauty that's contain'd in it.

## BIANCA.

Well said, Peter! Old as you are, you will be paying *us* compliments. But we can't listen to 'em now—you must hasten with the letter, that you may be sooner back, to keep a good look out.

## CONSTANTIA.

True, kind Bianca. And, fear not, good Peter, but Curvofo, by this time, repents him of the offence he has given you.—Nor doubt but that whatever you may think unkind in him shall be amply amended by the gratitude of Constantia.

[Exit with Bianca.

## PETER.

Well, time will shew—and, perhaps, it will prove so; for time does wonders. Now, who would have thought that Peter Pullhaul shou'd quit his birth in an English first-rate to be major domo to a lord in Italy—that he shou'd leave him to turn fisherman in an island with a single house on it—and that the first time he happen'd to drag for a few *loose fish* he shou'd catch a countess.

## SONG—PETER.

At Kew, one morn, was Peter born,  
At Limehouse educated;  
I learnt to pull with Simon Scull,  
And a tightish lad was rated.  
For coat and badge I'd often try,  
And when “first oars!” 'twas who but I,  
While the pretty girls would archly cry,  
“Oh, did you not hear of a jolly young waterman,  
Who at Blackfriar's bridge used for to ply?

“ He

" He feather'd his oars with such skill and dexterity,  
 " Winning each heart, and delighting each eye."

But, grown a man, I soon began,

To quit each boyish notion :

With old Benbow I swore to go,

And brave the foaming ocean.

With him I sail'd twelve years, or nigh,

And saw the gallant hero die,

Yet 'scap'd each shot myself, for why,

" There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,

" To keep watch for the life of poor Jack."

To Italy, a great grande,

Brought me thro' fortune's steerage ;

By chance of war

A British tar

May gain Italian peerage.

Now hither sent by friends unkind,

And in this island close confin'd,

I sigh for that I've left behind,

" For, oh ! it's a nice little island !

" A right little, tight little island !"

May its commerce increase,

While the blessings of peace

Make glad every heart in the island.

[Exit.]

#### SCENE IV.—Orlando's apartment, with the cabinet.

*Enter CURVOSO, ORLANDO, and LORENZO.*

CURVOSO.

Well, but where is the sensible young slut? Why is she concealed? One wou'd have thought, that when she found herself safe with the man of her choice, she'd have hopp'd out of her cage like a tame pigeon.

ORLANDO.

Silence! The voice of love alone must call Con-

stantia from concealment. (*Knocks at door.*) My love! Constantia! (*A pause—no answer.*)

CURVOSO.

Try again.—Women never comply at the first time of asking. You'd better call again.

LORENZO.

Surely my sister has not deceived you too.

ORLANDO.

Who dares suspect Constantia of deceit? (*Opens the door.*) Not here! Amazement!

*Enter an ATTENDANT.*

ATTENDANT (*To Orlando*).

The Lady Crudelia, my Lord, has left the palace, and requested this (*Giving a letter*) might be instantly delivered to *you*. And the Lady Doralice begs you will dispense with her presence at the entertainment which is, by your commands, preparing.

(*Orlando reads to himself.*)

CURVOSO.

Oh! then there's mischief indeed! And my poor daughter.

LORENZO (*To Orlando*):

Pray, Sir, relieve our anxiety.

ORLANDO.

Joy! joy! Crudelia repents her jealousy, and confesses having forced away Constantia; and, by means of the abbess of the neighbouring convent, generously informs me where to find her. Let all my household repair to the island on the lake.

Haften

Hasten my swiftest gondola, and let its oars equal  
the wings of love.

CURVOSO.

Wings of love! Wings of nonsense! I'll see about  
the boats myself.—I'll see after the watermen.—  
And adod! if they don't handle their skulls, I'll  
knock their pates about. [Exit.

LORENZO.

And now, Orlando, what can equal our prospects  
of felicity?

ORLANDO.

Nothing, good Lorenzo; for second only to the  
possession of her we love, is the pleasure to behold  
the happiness which beams through the eyes of a  
friend.

DUET—LORENZO AND ORLANDO.

With a friend and a wife,

First blessings in life,

What on earth can our envied condition amend?

Shou'd sweet offspring be ours,

Grant this, oh, ye pow'rs!

Be the girls like my wife, and the boys like my friend. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.—*A hall in the palace.*

Enter FLORETTA.

FLORETTA.

There—now I've lost Whimsicula again—and if  
I wasn't well assured that madam Curiosa and her  
pretty mistress were safe out of the palace, I should  
begin to be as jealous as they were.

Enter WHIMSICULO.

Why, where have you been? The boats are nearly  
ready to set off, and I, that ought to be the *first*,  
shall be the latest, to hail the felicity of my lady.

WHIMSICULO.

Tell her you waited for *me*, and she'll not wonder at your being detained. They're only making our boat as fine as the rest. I have secured the best watermen, and we shall be time enough to land with the foremost of them.

FLORETTA.

How charming and happy the dear couple will be !

WHIMSICULO.

And so shall you and I—and then there'll be a couple of happy couples, besides Lorenzo and madam Leonora.

DUET.

**WHIM.** O, what a monstrous gay day !

Smooth is the path that was rough,

**FLOR.** My lord he will marry my lady,

And then he'll be happy enough.

**WHIM.** Lorenzo will wed Leonora,

**FLOR.** Dear, how they'll all bill and coo !

**WHIM.** I shall get married to Flora,

**FLOR.** And Flora don't care if you do.

**BOTH.** Then, hey for the blessing and kissing !

And hey for the merry blind boy !

Sorrow alone shall be missing,

While all of us caper for joy.

**FLOR.** Enmity now is all over,

Jealousy's gone for a nun,

**WHIM.** Now we shall all live in clover,

With junketting, frolic and fun.

I have got money in plenty,

**FLOR.** Money's no matter to me ;

**WHIM.** Then shew me a couple in twenty

**FLOR.** Half so happy as we !

**BOTH.** Then hey for the blessing and kissing, &c. [Exeunt.

SCENE

**SCENE** the last.—*The outside of Bianca's cottage on the island, with a view of the lake reflecting the moon which is just seen rising from behind the trees.*

*Enter BIANCA from the cottage.*

BIANCA.

Well-a-day, what a time is Peter! My lady is quite uneasy at it. If the moon was not rising I should fear he had put the head of his boat the wrong way. (Peter appears in a boat and lands.) Here he comes, by Saint Veronica! Make haste, Peter! Pull away, Peter! By the mafs, he humours an oar in a pretty style; but not like my dear deceased Dominick. No, no; for feathering an oar, throwing out a net, or hauling it in again, there was no man in the island could match him.

PETER (*who, during her speech, has landed*).

That I believe; for he was the only one that lived on it. But where's the lady. They kept me so long at the convent that I began to fear some trick. I have, however, at length, brought an answer.

BIANCA.

Carry it in—she's all impatience. (Peter goes into the house.) What goes yonder? (Boats, with lights, appear in the distance.) As I live 'tis some pretty water-shew! and coming this way too.

*Re-enter PETER, from the cottage.*

PETER.

Why, I see no lady.

BIANCA.

No lady!

THE CABINET;

PETER.

There's nobody but an old woman in the chimney-corner, and she's either deaf or stupid. I left the letter on the table.

BIANCA.

Well-a-day! but I had forgot.—Well, come in, and I warrant I'll find her. We have little force to fight against those who may come for her, and you shall find we have made a pretty device to mislead them. (*Music heard.*)

PETER (*Looking out*).

Yon galleys are approaching the island.

BIANCA.

O dear! if they should be foes, you'll stand by us, Peter?

PETER.

That I will.—They're bravely drest.

BIANCA.

But there's a whole fleet of them.

PETER.

Never mind, Lady Constantia is queen of the island, thou art prime minister, and I'm first lord of the admiralty. And I never knew an Englishman in that situation who feared the approach of an enemy's fleet. So let's go hold a council of war directly.

[*Exeunt into cottage.*

(*Music from the water heard louder.—Large galleys drest in rich flags, with lanterns at the stern-galleries, pass across—Orlando, Lorenzo, and the rest of the characters and attendants, with lights,*

A COMIC OPERA.

23

*lights, land and arrange themselves round the stage.*

—*Music stops.*)

ORLANDO.

Come, let us enter this ennobled cottage.—The honour'd roof that gives Constantia shelter becomes a palace, and encloses the richest gem on earth.—Open, I say.

PETER (*Opens the door.*).

(*Standing in the door way.*) Then you might say it civilly at least.

CURVOSO.

Oh, Peter, your master's come.

PETER.

I have no master, I'm the master here. This is my cottage.—My cottage is my castle, and while its mine I'm king on't.

LORENZO.

Nay, but we come to make thy fortune. Lead us to Constantia and thou art rich for life.

PETER.

So I am now. I've health, a trade, and a clear conscience.

ORLANDO.

But Constantia—

PETER.

Is not here—There's nobody but myself, and two other old women, in the cottage, except some dried fish and a cat, and those you are welcome to.

LORENZO.

You know us for Constantia's friends, then why deny her?

## THE CABINET;

PETER.

Because she bid me.—Zounds ! I'm so unused to telling lies, I shall never get into practice.

CURVOSO.

Come, come, I'll hear no more of this insolence. I fear'd I had done him wrong ; but he's a greater rogue than I thought him. Enter the cottage.

[*Ekeunt Lorenzo and Orlando, with Attendants into cottage.*

Seize him—knock him down !

PETER (*To Attendants*).

Don't—when a man stands up for the rights of hospitality whoever knocks him down must be a rascal. I'll not be taken quietly.

(*Two Attendants advance to seize him.*)

FLORETTA (*Rushes between*).

Oh ! do not hurt my father.

CURVOSO.

Take her away. (*They approach her.*)

(*Whimsiculo interposes, and snatches one of their swords.*)

WHIMSICULO.

Touch my Floretta, or her father either, and I'll make crow's meat of you. Courage, old heart of oak ! In point of honour the weak side is always the strongest, and for an old man, and a young woman, I can fight like a devil.

PETER.

You're a brave fellow—and shall marry the girl you know how to protect.

CURVOSO.

What will nobody—

LEONORA.

Pray wait—my brother comes.

*Enter (from the cottage) ORLANDO and LORENZO, with BIANCA and CONSTANTIA guarded.—Constantia disguised like a poor decrepid old woman.*

ORLANDO.

That villain speaks too true—she's not here.—Confess where she is hid, or torture— (*To Peter.*)

PETER.—

Would only give me a lock-jaw ; and then you'd not get a word from me.

(*Bianca whispers to Constantia.*)

CURVOSO.

The two hags whisper.—Instantly confess, or— (*To Bianca.*)

BIANCA.

O mercy ! mercy ! I will confess—that I know no more of the matter than old Beatrice here ; who perhaps may find her, because she's a sort of a prophetess.

CURVOSO.

A what ?

BIANCA.

Indeed, she has some skill ; and whatever she says must be true, because she's dumb.

WHIMSICULO (*Apart to Floretta.*)

Pity she hadn't been younger ! She'd have made a charming wife.

CURVOSO.

CURVOSO.

Dumb! then how can she tell?

BIANCA.

By signs, my lord. She knows what's past, and bade me tell you that the disgrace you once got into by making love to the bailey's wife in the castle garden should teach you to be less severe upon others.

CURVOSO.

The hussay's a witch.

ORLANDO (*To Bianca*).

Then ask her where's Constantia.

BIANCA.

I have asked her, Signior—and she says, if you had any true love about you, you wou'd have found her of your own accord, when she was first hid in the cabinet. And that you ought to be at no loss now, when she is near enough to hear every word you say.

CURVOSO.

I tell you what—if the dumb lady don't instantly speak her meaning, and produce my daughter, she shall be burnt for a witch. Lay hold of her.

(*They go to seize her, she throws off her disguise.*)

ALL (*but Peter and Bianca*).

Constantia!

CONSTANTIA.

Yes, Constantia, who assumed this disguise to deceive enemies, not friends like these—who kneels to you for pardon (*To Curvofo.*)—who trusts to you for her future happiness—(*To Orlando.*) who

is

is indebted to that worthy cottager for protection (*To Bianca.*)—and to honest Peter for life itself.

## ORLANDO.

Transporting moment!—Your blessing leaves us nothing here to wish for.

(*They kneel to Curvoso, as do also Leonora and Lorenzo.*)

## CURVOSO.

Take it, my children all. (*They rise.*) And now, Peter, I'm ashamed.—I can't look at you.—You have twice laid me under obligations which nothing can cancel.—You are a father—you are an Englishman, and if I was one, why I'd say, like an Englishman—“ dam'me, master, give me your hand.”

## PETER.

And then, if I was you, I shou'd say, “ dam'me, Peter, here it is.” (*They shake hands.*) We're all friends, my lord.—A Briton shou'd as soon think of running from his foe in time of *war*, as refuse to accept the hand which is offered him in sign of *peace*.

## FINALE.

**ORLANDO.** To forgive and forget,  
Is humanity's debt,

**CONST.** Which, when faults are acknowledg'd, we ever shou'd pay,  
That the poet may live,

Don't forget to forgive,  
And send all your petitioners happy away.

**LEON.** Our Cabinet closing,  
From fiction reposing,

Nor princes, Italians, or nobles you view:

**LOR.** But, true Britons we,  
Who hope never to see

Any masters before us, but Britons like you.

**CHORUS**—To forgive, &c.

**BIANCA.** My hut, tho' 'twere less,  
In the hour of distress,  
To the child of misfortune with pleasure I'd lend,

**PETER.** And ne'er may this isle  
Hold the mortal so vile  
Who virtue in want wou'd refuse to befriend.

**CHE.**—To forgive, &c.

**FLORETTA.** Then, if all is a joke,  
Any girl 'twou'd provoke  
To be courting all night, yet no husband obtain;

**WHIM-SICULO.** Nay, pr'ythee, don't grieve.  
For, if friends give us leave,  
Believe me, I'll court you again and again.

**CHE.**—Then forgive and forget,  
'Tis humanity's debt,

Which, when faults are acknowledg'd, we ever shou'd pay.  
That the poet may live,  
Don't forget to forgive,

And send all your petitioners happy away.

THE END.

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